

Maurice Hinchey NEWS

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HINCHEY AMENDMENT NARROWLY FAILS, WOULD HAVE PROVIDED \$200 MILLION FOR ENERGY RESEARCH

WASHINGTON - An amendment authored by U.S. Representative Maurice Hinchey (D-NY) to increase funding for energy efficiency research was voted down along party lines today. The amendment would have added \$200 million for energy research to the Interior Appropriations bill.

"This amendment would have provided badly needed funds for energy research initiatives that would help American consumers and businesses," said Hinchey. "This type of research could lead to more energy-efficient transportation and buildings, more plentiful and affordable electricity, reduced reliance on foreign oil, and new technologies and approaches to global warming."

President Bush's budget proposal for both conservation and fossil fuel research would have gutted many important programs that help Americans use fuels and electricity more efficiently. The appropriations bill passed last week by the Interior Subcommittee, on which Hinchey serves, restored many of these cuts but left some research programs below fiscal year 2001 levels. Hinchey's amendment would have provided an additional \$200 million to the U.S. Department of Energy's Energy Conservation program and its Fossil Energy Research and Development program. All 33 Republican members of the committee who were present voted against the amendment while all 27 Democrats voted in favor.

"We made great strides in the subcommittee, but simply restoring the damage done by the president's budget proposal is not sufficient to help consumers," Hinchey added. "Finding ways to use energy more efficiently should be the centerpiece of our energy policy."

Although Hinchey was also disappointed that an amendment to provide an additional \$25 million for the National Endowments for the Arts and Humanities and the Institute for Museum and Library Services failed to pass, he voted in favor of the Interior Appropriations bill that passed the full committee today. Overall, the bill appropriates \$814 million more than the amount the administration requested.

"The bill didn't include everything I would have liked, but it's a vast improvement over the Bush Administration's original request," Hinchey explained.